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2. Akuapem Interdenominational Church, Kintor-Akuapem
3. Mr. Steve Tetley (PCG, Christ Congregation, Adentan)

## STAFF NEWS



Director and Staff of the PIRRC

The following are the Staff of the PIRRC:

- |                                |                                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong | - Director                         |
| Mr. Michael S. Nortey          | - Administrator                    |
| Mr. Benjamin Opoku Asare       | - Library / Research Assistant     |
| Mr. Emmanuel Kwame Tetley      | - Research Assistant               |
| Mr. Kingsley Abdulai           | - Caretaker / Driver               |
| Mr. Ebenezer Teteh             | - Caretaker (Director's Residence) |

## Become a friend of the Centre

You can support the mission of the PIRRC by making a one-off cash donation or monthly donations through the PIRRC accounts with **Woodbank Ghana Ltd: Ghana Credit: 0010094402166804**, Short Code 13-01-01 or **US Dollar: 0012074402166801**

Kindly contact the Centre on 0302 923 631, 0302942 353 020 815 2360, 024 619 7083 for 'FRIENDS OF THE CENTRE' application forms.

## Adinkra Symbols in our Logo



**Akoma Ntoso** (linked hearts)  
 Symbol of understanding and agreement



**Esi ne Tekrema** (the teeth and the tongue)  
 symbol of friendship and interdependence

## MISSION OF PIRRC

- To educate Christians and other faith communities on Interfaith matters.
- To carry out research, documentation, publication and dissemination of materials on interfaith issues.
- As a resource for Christians seeking to witness in a multi-faith context, the Centre promotes and facilitate interfaith dialogue between Christians and people of other faiths especially Muslims.

## PIRRC SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Major financial grants from:

1. Presbyterian Church of Ghana
2. First Presbyterian Church Evanston, Chicago, USA
3. PCUSA's Outreach Foundation
4. Presbyterian Church in Canada (International Ministries)
5. EMS, Germany

## PIRRC to partner with the Henry Martyn Institute (International Centre for Interfaith Relations and Reconciliation.)

The Ecumenical Centre in Frankfurt is in the process of assisting to establish South-South cooperation between PIRRC and the Henry Martyn Institute (An International Centre for Interfaith Relations and Reconciliation).



Director of PIRRC with some leaders of Henry Martyn Institute

## INTERFAITH YOUTH PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TRAINER OF TRAINERS WORKSHOP

The PIRRC organized a two-day Trainer of Trainers' workshop at the Institute of Local Government Studies, Accra from 30th November to 1st December 2010. The work

-shop was organised for young people drawn from the various faith communities in Ghana so as to build their capacity in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation.

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A group picture of Participants and Guests at the Opening of the Interfaith Youth Trainer of Trainers Workshop

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## NEW DIRECTOR FOR PIRRC

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, the immediate past Director of Ecumenical and Social Relations of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has been appointed as the new Director of the Presbyterian Interfaith Research and Resource Centre (PIRRC), Haatso-Accra. He assumed duty on 1st Sept. 2010.

He replaced Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa, who was the Acting Director of PIRRC from 2008 to August 2010.

We wish to congratulate Dr. Ayete-Nyampong on his appointment and entreat all partners and friends of the Centre to pray for him and his family.



Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong (PhD)  
 (Director of PIRRC)

Locate the **Presbyterian Interfaith Research & Resource Centre** at North Haatso (Haatso-Ecomog) Opposite the Afari-Djan Junction on the 3rd Avenue Street.

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**Discard fear  
 Deal with prejudice  
 Inevitable confidence**

# UPCOMING PROGRAMMES FOR 2011

In line with the Strategic Plan of the Centre, we wish to carry out the following activities in 2011:

## January – February, 2011

Seminars on Interfaith Relations in all the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

## March 14 – 17

International Workshop on "Women in Religion: Their Role as Agents of Peace and Development". Participants are expected from Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Liberia, South Africa, Canada, Germany and India. Any woman interested in participating in this conference should register at our website: [www.pirrcghana.org](http://www.pirrcghana.org)

## April 4 – 6

Workshop on "Conflict Transformation and Peace building" for youth from different Religions and Traditional Councils. This workshop will be a follow-up workshop on the first one organized from 30th November to 1st December, 2010, and which led to the founding of the "Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace" (GIYNEP).

## April 28 – 29

Visit of PIRRC Director and GIYNEP representatives to the leaders of the various Religious Bodies in Accra, Ghana. The aim of the visit is to introduce the new PIRRC Director to leaders of the Religious Bodies and solicit their support and cooperation with PIRRC;

and also introduce the aim and objectives of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNEP).

## June 1

A National Seminar on "Interfaith Approach to Sustaining the Environment". Details of this programme will be announced on our website, later.

## July 18 – 25

Launching of PIRRC Research Paper. Hosting of a Visiting Professor from the Henry Martyn Institute in India.

## July 27

A day Conference on "Women in the fight Against Disease and Poverty". Women from different religions will be invited to address the topic. This programme will be done in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Women and Children Affairs, together with other sponsors.

## August 19 – 25

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

## September – December

Training Seminars in all the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

## December 13

PIRRC Anniversary Symposium

## GIYNEP LAUNCH AND PRESS CONFERENCE

The Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNEP) was formed at the resolution of the Youth participants of the Interfaith Youth Peace Building and Conflict Transformation Trainer of Trainers workshop, to enable them remain connected and be effective in giving feedback about their work in the areas of Peace Building and Inter-religious Cooperation. The GIYNEP was inaugurated on the 8th of December 2010 at a Press Conference where its first communiqué was read.

The objectives of GIYNEP are as follows:

- Empower its members to serve as agents of peace.
- Promote interreligious cooperation among the youth.
- Train the youth in the skills of Peace building and Conflict transformation within religious faith communities and the nation as a whole to ensure peace and harmony in Ghana.

## PIRRC to enter into working Relations with IRAS COTIS (An Interreligious Working Group in Switzerland.)



Director of PIRRC in a pose with the Secretary of IRAS COTIS Office in Basel. The Director of PIRRC visited the office of IRAS COTIS in Basel in November 2010.

## COMMUNIQUE

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for human dignity and peace and development. Politicians must therefore desist from taking advantage of the exuberance, strength, enthusiasm and vibrancy of the youth for violent and foul acts, as a means to satisfy their political ambitions. Instead, they should find creative ways of harnessing good qualities of the youth, for development of the nation and the betterment of all.

### Media

1. The media should desist from airing or publishing derogatory and divisive statements and pronouncements that incite young people to violence, cause tension and inflame passions among the populace and retard development.
2. The various media houses should also use their respective media reportage to educate the populace and promote peace in all its forms.

## SEMINAR WITH VOLTA PRESBYTERY



A group picture of Participants and Resource Persons of the Volta Seminar

The PIRRC organized a 1 day seminar for Ministers and lay leaders of the Volta Presbytery on Tuesday, 20th October 2010. The seminar aimed at discussing Primal Religion and the Christian Faith; sharing practical ways of evangelising people of other faiths; assessing the impact of the

seminars already held; identifying needs pertaining to interfaith of the Presbytery and making the Centre known to as many as possible so they can access its services.

The Centre intends to organise similar seminars in the remaining Presbyteries soon.

## Who is My Neighbour?

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None of us has only one identity. That becomes more and more clear to all of us in the global community, and we cannot chose only one identity – and shape it as if we were living in the past. I am not sure anybody really had only identity in the past, either. But when we say "we", we can say it in such a way as to say "we", not the Others, not the stranger, not the one who does not share our values and faith. Or we can say "we" in a way which is inclusive, a "we" which is plural and includes different identities, values and faiths. How do we talk about each other? How do we report on

the concerns of faith communities different from our own? How can we counter the enemy images so present in the media? And how can we use language and the way we talk about one another positively for deepening our living together?

To bring to a conclusion what I have shared with you so far, I would like to emphasize the importance of relevant and balanced religious education.

We are called to be good examples – to create new parables – from our own lives.

May God give us courage to do so.

## PIRRC INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2011

The PIRRC is organizing an International Women's Conference as follows.

<b>Theme:</b>	<b>Women in Religion: Their Role as Agents of Peace and Development</b>
<b>Date:</b>	14th - 17th March 2011
<b>Venue:</b>	Presbyterian Women's Centre, Abokobi-Accra.
<b>Participation Fee:</b>	GHC 100.00 (this fee is highly subsidized)

Interested participants should call the PIRRC Office on 0302 923 831, 024 6197083, 020 8152360 for registration forms and enquiries.

There would be other participants and speakers expected from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malawi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Canada, Germany and India.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES IN 2010

#### Institutions (NUPS-G P-SICE Orientations & Interfaith Education)

- University of Ghana: National Union of Presbyterian Students –Ghana (NUPS-G)
- Koforidua Polytechnic
- Trinity Theological Seminary
- University for Development Studies (Nyankpala Campus)
- University of Education, Winneba
- University of Cape Coast (NUPS-G National Council)

#### Leadership Training Seminar

- Y. P. G. National & Presbytery Leaders at Aberifi-Kwahu
- Women's Fellowship Leaders seminar at Abokobi
- Men's Fellowship Delegates Conference at Ho
- MS International Youth Network-Ghana Working Group at Akropong

#### Church Visitations

- Rev. Friedrich Manning Memorial Congregation, Akasombo
- Adabraka Official Town Presbyterian Church, Accra

## The World Peace Academy to forge Working Relations with PIRRC

The Director of the World Peace Academy (MASPCT) at the World Peace Academy of the University of Basel, Prof. Dr. Dietrich Fischer intends to visit PIRRC in Ghana to advance closer working relations. As part of this cooperation, applications are invited from Ghanaians interested in pursuing a Master of Advanced Studies in Peace

and Conflict Transformation (MASPCT) at the World Peace Academy of the University of Basel.) The Director of PIRRC was a guest at a lecture delivered by Prof. Dr. Richard Friedli on 'What Religions Can Contribute to Peace' in November, 2010 at the World Peace Academy, University of Basel, Switzerland.



Director of PIRRC in a pose with Prof. Dr. Fischer, Director of World Peace Academy

National Interfaith Relations Conference

The PIRRC organised a National Interfaith Relations Conference on the 26th and 27th of May 2010 at the Presbyterian Women's Centre, Abokobi. The Conference, under the theme: 'Understanding 'The Other': Christians Engaging with People of Other Faiths' was targeted at Presbytery Directors of Ecumenical & Social Relations (DESR), Coordinators of the Northern Outreach Programme (N.O.P.) and Chairpersons of the Committee of People of Other Faiths. A total of twenty-seven participants were recorded from fourteen Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The aim was to inform, prepare and resource

Christian leaders within the various Presbyteries of the PCG to bear meaningful witness to people of other faiths and cultivate good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence with people of other faiths.

Some topics discussed at the conference were 'Why Engagement?' (this focussed on the need to promote attitudes towards people of other faiths especially Muslims and to explore ways of entering into discussion and dialogue with them, 'The Bible and People of Other Faiths (Old Testament & New Testament)' and 'The Primal Context and A Christian Response to Traditional Practices and Taboos'. Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa and Mr. Michael S. Nortey facilitated the conference.



Resource Persons and Participants at the National Interfaith Relations Conference

**Monthly Prayer & Training Days**

As part of our mission to inform, resource and prepare the church as an effective witness to people of other faiths, the PIRRC has instituted a regular monthly Prayer and Training Day usually held on the 3rd Saturday of every month. The meeting affords participants the opportunity to acquire the appropriate skills in relating to people of other faiths and also pray



Participants and Resource Persons at a monthly prayer & Training Day

**Youth**

1. Young people should show high level of tolerance in their relationship with others especially those of other religious, cultural, linguistic and political backgrounds.
2. All young people should boldly but peacefully resist any attempt by any political, religious and traditional leaders and any other individual, to induce, influence or manipulate them to engage in any form of violence or any action that would not bring peace.
3. Young people should be circumspect in the receipt of monetary and material gifts intended to influence their decision.

**Government and Politicians**

1. Government and politicians should give fair treatment and equal opportunity to all without any form of discrimination along religious, ethnic or other grounds.
2. Politicians should be wary of the kind of utterances they make especially in public since such utterances have the potential of either polarising



Participants and Religious Leaders of the GIYNPE Launch & Press Conference

4. The Youth of Ghana should accord education the highest priority and endeavour to learn about those they consider to be 'different from them' in order to dispel fears, stereotypes and prejudices.

**Religious leaders and followers**

1. Leaders, believers and adherents of all faiths and religions should respect each other's beliefs, norms and values, in dealing with one other.
2. In promoting one's religion, Preachers and teachers of the various religions should desist from using verbal and physical attack people of other faiths.
3. Religious as well as traditional leaders should bury their differences and use their high offices to promote peace in Ghanaian society.

and causing unrest in the country, or uniting the nation and promoting peace for development. The latter should always be the guiding principle to our politicians and everyone else when they make utterances both in private and public.

3. The youth of today are the future leaders of this country as it is always said. Young people look forward to a future devoid of chaos and violence; a future of respect

In its quest to empower the youth and to compliment the efforts of Government and other stakeholders in peace building and conflict resolution, the Presbyterian Interfaith Research and Resource Centre organised a two-day training seminar on Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation from 30th of November to 1st December 2010 for young people from different religious organisations to equip them with peace building and conflict resolution skills and also to promote inter-religious cooperation and peaceful co-existence.

This workshop which is the first of its kind in the country resulted in the establishment of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE).

Membership of GIYNPE comprises young Muslims, Christians of various denominations and youth representatives from Traditional Councils.

As a result of the training and the discussions held at the workshop, members of GIYNPE agreed that:

Peace is a necessity of life and a recipe for social, political, economic, religious and cultural development. Traditional rulers, religious and political leaders, the media and all stakeholders and individuals should make conscious effort to promote and work for peace at all levels.

Everyone, regardless of his or her religious, social, political and cultural background must seek to live in peace and not deny others peace on the basis of selfish gains.

GIYNPE made specific calls on the following groups:

Participants at the workshop comprised young people from various Islamic groups (i.e Ahmadiyya, Sunnis, Shia etc), the Catholic Church, La-Traditional Council and the Northern Outreach Programme of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. There were also students from the Islamic University College, Ghana and Trinity Theological Seminary as well as some youth of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. In all twenty-seven (27) youth participated in the workshop.

The workshop additionally provided a platform for the Youth to dialogue on interfaith related issues, which led to the formation of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE) and the subsequent issuance of a communiqué.

One of the youth involved in the PCG/EMS Youth Peace Project shared experiences about the project with the participants.

Resource Persons at the workshop were the Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, Director of PIRRC and Sheikh Seebaway Zakaria, a Senior Lecturer at the Islamic University College, Ghana. Another Islamic Scholar, Sheikh Armiyawo Shaibu from the Islamic Education Unit and a Chief from the La Traditional Council, Nii Oten Granaky I also graced the official opening and launch of GIYNPE respectively.

The workshop was organised with the kind financial support by EMS, Germany.

# LAUNCHING OF GHANA INTERFAITH YOUTH NETWORK FOR PEACE (GIYNPE) ON 8TH DECEMBER, 2010



**Speech by Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong,**

*Director of Presbyterian Interfaith Research and Resource Centre (PIRRC)  
& Coordinator of Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE)*

Distinguished guests, media persons present, and members of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE), we have gathered here to witness a landmark event i.e. the launching of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE), and the reading of its first communiqué.

The formation of this group was the result of a two-day Training of Trainers Workshop on 'Peace Building and Conflict Transformation' organised by the Presbyterian Interfaith Research and Resource Centre (PIRRC) from 30th November to 1st December 2010 at the Institute of Local Government Studies in Accra.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we live in a pluralistic and a multifaith society where our neighbours could be from different tribes or different faiths. Learning to co-exist peacefully and cooperating to build healthy relationships for National Development should be a top priority of any group existing within the Ghanaian society.

The recent incidence of civil war, political upheaval and interreligious strife within the West African sub-region are warnings too serious to be ignored and taken for granted. Ghana cannot afford to go the way of other African nations which are constantly facing the consequences of war and violence.

Peace is an essential ingredient for national development and prosperity. The future of this nation can be guaranteed if the citizens work assiduously to promote peace and healthy relationships at all levels, be it political, social, religious or family.

The Youth participants of the Peace building and Conflict Transformation

Workshop were drawn from the different faith communities e.g. Catholic, Presbyterian, Ahmadiyya, Sunnis, La-Traditional Council, the Northern Outreach Programme of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Students from the Islamic University and Trinity Theological Seminary.

These Youth also come from the diverse ethnic groups in Ghana including citizens from Bawku, Ashanti, Akuapem, Fanti, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Dagbon etc. Having being trained in Peace building and Conflict Transformation, the Youth participants have resolved to go back to their tribes and religious communities to build the capacity of other Youths in Peace building and Conflict Transformation.

To remain connected and be effective in giving feedback about their work, the Youth participants have constituted themselves into the core group of the GHANA INTERFAITH YOUTH NETWORK FOR PEACE (GIYNPE). It is hoped that this group would expand to bring on board other Youth from different religious and social backgrounds to network to promote and sustain the peace of this nation and reach out to other nations beyond the borders of Ghana.

The GIYNPE also seeks to cooperate and collaborate with NGOs, Religious Institutions, Government Agencies and Traditional Authorities which share a similar vision to promote peace, resolve and prevent conflicts in our nation.

On this note, and before the reading of the communiqué from the Youth, it is my pleasure to declare this group duly launched in the Name of God Almighty. Long live Ghana, Long live GIYNPE. Thank you.

## PIRRC WELCOMES ISLAMIC VOLUNTEER



The Presbyterian Interfaith Research and Resource Centre (PIRRC) has attracted its first Islamic volunteer. Ms. Lina Amatus-Salaam Ennin who holds a B. Sc Degree from the University of Ghana Business School with specialisation in Banking and Finance, will be attached to the Coordinating office of the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE) based in the PIRRC.

It would be recalled that in December 2010, Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, after training a group of young Christians, Muslims and traditionalist, launched a new body, the Ghana Interfaith Youth Network for Peace (GIYNPE) with the aim of promoting peace work among the youth of the various religions in Ghana.

## PIRRC ORGANISES A TRAINING SEMINAR FOR CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS

The Presbyterian Interfaith Research & Resource Centre (PIRRC) on Saturday 29th January, 2011 organised a Training Programme for the various Religious Groups on the theme 'Religion as a Resource for Peace: The Ghana Situation'. The resource person for the day, Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, PhD (Director of the Centre), focused his presentation on the demographic analysis of the different Religions in the Country as well as the need for these various Religious groups to live in harmony. The programme was attended by some Christians and Muslims within Accra. The Muslims group comprises representatives from the Ahmadiyya movement, and also Islamic university.



# Who is My Neighbour?

A compilation of excerpts from a Presentation by the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, to the World Islamic Call Society, Tripoli, Libya, 10 January 2011



How can we, as Christians and Muslims, be good neighbours in the local village and in the global village? How can we live together in our nations and across the borders of nations taking care of one another? The good neighbour is not limited by any border but always able to cross the borders, to care and to be what we need to be to one another.

So this leads me to another question, about what we have to offer as people of faith, as spiritual leaders, to our neighbours in a world which lives in great need of a renewed understanding of neighbourliness and could learn so much from our faith perspectives.

Every religion comes with comprehensive claims. Every religion provides its followers with a set of values and expects the faithful to live according to these values. In multi-religious societies the interrelation of diverse values and ways of life needs to be developed on the basis of mutual respect in a public process of dialogue in society. This is not only about ideas and concepts but about our daily life.

From the outset the WCC posed the question to the churches: How does the one humanity belong together in the one world? We share the same planet. We share the destiny of humanity. We all, each one of us and every human being,

wherever we live, whoever we are, whatever faith we have, share the dignity of being created in the image of God. Let me again emphasize that we do all of these by putting our spiritual resources into practice; people who pray, and especially those who pray for other people express in the deepest way not only their concerns for others but also their love for others. The deepest way we have for expressing our relationships with other human beings is to pray for one another. These spiritual gifts should shape our spiritual leadership as religious leaders.

How do we speak about one another? Do we know the power of our own language? Being neighbours in the same global community – where whatever happens to one of us affects all – how do we live and practice the call to be "good neighbour" in the way we speak?

The power of language is very subtle. The use of one, small word can convey totally different messages. If we take as an example our use of the word "we", it can be a very exclusive word or, on the contrary, a very inclusive one. There is a need for a new understanding of "we" that indicates an inclusive and not an exclusive identity.

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## PIRRC IN PICTURES



Students from the University of Dakawa Theological Seminary, June, 2010 visited PIRRC - 20/11/11

Participants at health building seminar during the Interfaith Health Building and Conflict Transformation Forum, Accra, Ghana, 11/12/10